

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3748

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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TAGS: PFOR SY, US, XF

SUBJ: SYRIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT ON US REASSESSMENT AND ME

SITUATION

1. JUNE 18 AL-BAATH PUBLISHED COLUMN BY ABDULLAH KHALID
UNDER TITLE "SYRIAN POLITICAL MOVEMENT AND REASSESSMENT OF
AMERICAN POLICY." KHALID POSED NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING
U.S. POLICY FOLLOWING SALZBURG SUMMIT. "HAS AMERICAN PRESIDENT
SUCCEEDED IN REASSESSING HIS MIDDLE EAST POLICY AS PROMISED
OR IS THIS LATEST STAGE ONLY AN AMERICAN MANEUVER TO PLAY
FOR TIME?" "WHAT IS VALUE OF REASSESSMENT IF IT DOES NOT LEAD
TO REAL CHANGE IN ISRAELI POSITION?" "HAS KISSINGER OBTAINED
REASSURANCES, EVEN SECRET, FROM RABIN ON POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE
IN ISRAELI POSITION OR WILL KISSINGER TRY TO FOLLOW POLICY OF
PROCRASTINATION ONCE AGAIN TO PREVENT HOLDING OF GENEVA
CONFERENCE?" IF U.S. PERSISTS IN OFFERING MILITARY/ECONOMIC
AID TO ISRAEL WITHOUT APPLYING PRESSURE, "HOW DOES IT EXPECT
ZIONISTS TO CHANGE THEIR POSITION?" WHY DOES U.S. SEEK
ANIMOSITY OF ENTIRE WORLD BY THREATENING TO SUSPEND AID
TO UN IF ISRAEL EXPELLED?

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2. KHALID THEN OUTLINED SYRIAN POSITION TOWARD ISRAEL:

"WHILE ALLOWING POLITICAL BATTLE EVERY CHANCE, SYRIA MUST STRIVE TO SECURE ALL MEANS AND METHODS FOR SUCCESSFUL CONFRONTATION WITH ZIONIST ENEMY IN CASE POLITICAL BATTLE SHOULD FAIL TO ACHIEVE GOALS OF ARAB NATION" -- COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND RECOGNITION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS WITH PLO AS SOLE LEGITIMATE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE.

3. REGARDING GENEVA CONFERENCE, SYRIAN ACCEPTANCE OF ATTENDANCE CONDITIONED BY AGREEMENT "IN ADVANCE" ON FOLLOWING TWO POINTS: (A) ATTENDANCE BY ALL CONCERNED PARTIES INCLUDING PLO AND (B) UNIFIED ARAB POSITION BEFORE ENTERING GENEVA.

4. KHALID NOTED THAT SYRIA'S RECENT ACTIVITY AFFECTING PALESTINIANS, JORDAN AND LEBANON HAS BEEN FOR "ONE PURPOSE: CONSOLIDATION OF THE EASTERN FRONT." HE THEN CONCLUDED "WHETHER WASHINGTON HAS CHANGED ITS POSITION OR NOT, ARAB STRUGGLE IS NOW CAPABLE OF DEALING NEW BLOW TO WORLD IMPERIALISM AND NEW DEFEAT TO U.S. WHICH WILL BE EVEN MORE SEVERE THAN ITS DEFEAT IN INDOCHINA."

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